

**REMARKS**

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 1, 4-6, 9-10, 13-15, and 16, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, and propose rewriting claims 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 17, and 18 in independent form to include the recitations of each claim's base claim. No new matter is introduced. Claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, and 18 are pending in the application.

In the Final Office Action dated February 11, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4-6, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Henderson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,526,333) and rejected claims 9-10 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Henderson. Because Applicants have canceled claims 1, 4-6, 9-10, 13-15, and 16 without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejections of these claims are thus rendered moot.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge Applicants' claim for priority in the next communication. Please refer to Applicants' letter of March 15, 2001, submitted concurrently with the filing of this application. In that letter, on page 2, Applicants claimed the right to priority based on Japanese Application No. 200-200134, filed June 30, 2000. A certified copy of that Japanese Application was also filed at that time.

The Examiner also objected to claims 2-3, 7-8, 11-12, and 17-18 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but deemed these claims allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the recitations of each claim's base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicants propose rewriting claims 2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 17, and 18 in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Additionally, claim 8 depends

from rewritten claim 7. Accordingly, Applicants submit claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, and 18 are in *prima facie* condition for allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner allow the claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner enter this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, placing claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, and 18 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendments do not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration and reexamination of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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